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COUNTRY Poland

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SUBJECT Agrarian Policy in Polish Territory
Ceded from Eastern Germany.

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SUPPLEMENT

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1. Government propaganda has recently publicized the legalization of land transfers made to settlers in the provinces ceded from Eastern Germany. A close analysis indicates that the Communist regime is not interested in the creation of a strong and self-sustaining peasant class. On the contrary, the agrarian policy is designed to keep the villages impoverished and dependent upon Government assistance. Private land ownership is limited to symbolic holdings for propaganda reasons. Thus the regime can retain more effective political control of the peasant class.
2. In territory ceded from Eastern Germany the Polish state has taken about 2 million hectares of arable land which has been disposed of as follows:
 - 1,100,000 Ha. - Retained under direct state ownership.
 - 800,000 Ha. - Transferred to the Red Army, Polish Army, educational institutions, and industrial concerns such as coal mines and steel mills.
 - 100,000 Ha. - Parceled out to new settlers.
3. Land plots parceled out to new settlers are too small to be self-sustaining. Farms of three hectares (and even one or two hectares for those who had no land) have been reported in the press. This policy is inconsistent with any rational economy and contradicts the Government's prewar plans and the program of the Polish underground, which set a peasant's farm at 8.15 hectares as a self-sustaining minimum. The 8.15 hectare minimum was also prescribed in the agrarian reconstruction program announced by the Council for National Unity on 15 March 1944.
4. The arable land retained by the state is under the bureaucratic control of the "Administration of State-Owned Lands." This administration employs about 100,000 peasants as agrarian workers. The effect of this organization is to create a new proletarian class in place of the independent farm holders called for in the original programs.

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5. The current system results in inefficient exploitation of land. The production from land under state or military and institutional control is much lower than that from land worked by individual settlers. Official statistics indicate that crops from state-administered lands last year were only 40% of normal production. While the newly-formed peasant farms, though they had no technical assistance at their disposal, achieved an output equal to 65% of normal production.

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